

## **“We have a responsibility to protect and look after those who cannot protect and look after themselves.”**

I will not turn my back on people who need the state’s help – vulnerable children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect, senior citizens, the disabled and chronically ill. It is our duty as citizens to take care of those who require assistance.

But we can do a better job of providing social services in a recovering economy by making targeted investments and planning for future improvements that will help people live better lives, and save taxpayer dollars in the long run.

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### **My Budget for Preserving the Safety Net for Vulnerable Children and Adults**

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**1 Maintains critical services.**  
Caring for those who can’t care for themselves is one of the state’s fundamental responsibilities. I am committed to funding the services that help keep children and vulnerable adults safe.

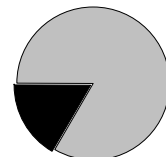
**2 Makes targeted investments to improve outcomes.** My budget speeds up child welfare investigations, replaces funds that community mental health clinics lost to federal funding cuts, and helps families complete child welfare case plans.

My plan addresses the demand for alcohol and drug treatment, providing twice the available treatment services, which will mean savings in other social service programs in the future.

**3 Finds solutions for taking care of our elderly.** Baby boomers are growing older and we need to be prepared to deliver and maintain the services they will need.

That’s why I am dedicating funds to examine options for reducing the need for long-term care services.

**The Social Services budget is about \$4 billion,  
nearly 17% of the State General Fund**



## The Governor's Budget for Social Services

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### Maintain critical services

**Funds the safety net.** The Governor's budget maintains funding for institutional and community care for children, the disabled, seniors and veterans. It provides support services for at-risk families, including emergency cash and food assistance. It supports investigations of child and adult abuse and neglect, interventions and foster care for children.  
*\$4.3 billion GF-State*

### Make targeted investments to improve outcomes

**Improves the child welfare system.** The focus of Child Protective Services is narrowed to investigations only. Other current functions are transferred to Child Welfare Services. Additional staff is hired so that investigations are initiated within 24 hours in more urgent cases, and no more than three days in less serious circumstances. Currently, it may take 10 days before an investigation gets started. In addition, social workers can visit children at least monthly while a case is open. *\$13 million GF-State*

**Provides pay raises for priority caregivers.** Funding is provided for a cost-of-living increase of 1.5 percent in 2006 and 2 percent in 2007 for vendors who provide 24-hour care or crisis stabilization for the state's most vulnerable clients. This includes foster care, residential care for the developmentally disabled, residential services for the aged, and crisis intervention services for children and adults. *\$33 million GF-State*

**Replaces money lost to federal funding cuts for community mental health services.** Because of a federal reinterpretation of Medicaid rules, Washington State faces reduced federal funding for community mental health centers that serve clients who don't qualify for Medicaid. The Governor's budget uses state dollars to replace the lost funding, so key community mental health services continue. This saves taxpayer dollars in the long run because people with mental health problems get help, instead of winding up in jails or hospitals. *\$80 million GF-State*

**Treats more people for alcohol and drug abuse.** The Governor doubles available drug and alcohol abuse treatment services. The current level of publicly funded substance abuse treatment is enough to meet only 20 percent of the demand. Individuals with untreated substance abuse disorders often develop other health problems, requiring more costly social or medical services including long-term care. Research indicates that for every public dollar invested in chemical dependency treatment, \$3.19 is saved in public expenditures in other social service programs. *\$17.4 million GF-State*

**Expands the successful Parent Representation Project** from two pilot counties to at least half of all Washington counties. This project provides enhanced attorney and social work services to parents with child welfare dependency or termination of parental rights cases. These enhanced services have been shown to increase parental engagement and to speed case processing times. *\$1.5 million GF-State, \$6 million Public Safety and Education Account*

### Find solutions for taking care of our elderly

**Creates a long-term care task force.** Funding is provided to support the work of an eight-member joint legislative and executive task force on long-term care. The task force will focus on financing options and on ways to better deliver chronic care management services so that the need for long-term care services is reduced. *\$580,000 GF-State*